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STAND TOGETHER: 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

November 25, 2017

By

H.E. Ms. Marcia Bernicat, Ambassador of the United States to Bangladesh

H.E. Ms. Leoni Cuelenaere, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Bangladesh

H.E. Ms. Alison Blake, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh

H.E. Ms. Panpimon Suwannapone, Ambassador of Royal Thai Embassy

H.E. Ms. Julia Niblett, Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh

H.E. Mr. Mikael Hemniti Winther, Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh

H.E. Ms. Sidsel Bleken, Ambassador of Norway to Bangladesh

H.E. Mr. René Holenstein, Ambassador of Switzerland to Bangladesh

H.E. Ms. Charlotta Schlyter, Ambassador of Sweden to Bangladesh.

H.E. Ms. Rensje Teerink, EU Ambassador to Bangladesh

H.E. Mr. Benoit Préfontaine, High Commissioner of Canada in Bangladesh

H.E. Mr. João Tabajara de Oliveira Junior, Brazilian Ambassador in Dhaka

Ms. Mia Seppo, UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh

Mr. Iori Kato, Representative a.i., United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Bangladesh

Ms. Shoko Ishikawa, Country Representative, UN Women Bangladesh

Ms. Janina Jaruzelski, Mission Director, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Ms. Christa Räder, World Food Program Representative in Bangladesh

We stand together in solidarity with the survivors of gender-based violence; we stand with the women, girls and allies who have bravely spoken out against harassment, rape, and domestic violence. And we stand with the voiceless, the shamed, and all those who are forced to live in silence.

We call on everyone, in Bangladesh and around the world, to *stand together* against gender-based violence.

We stand together with Bangladesh. Bangladesh has some of the highest rates of gender-based violence, but this is an issue that pervades our own countries and communities around the world.

We stand together to say over 600 reported cases of rape in Bangladesh—in 2017 alone— 600 is too many.

We stand together to shine a light on the 70 percent of abuse cases that are never reported. To the women and girls who are ignored, silenced, threatened, or shamed: we hear you and we see you. And we call on law enforcement and the judicial system, at every level, to make the justice system more responsive and more supportive of survivors.

We stand together to demand that schools throughout Bangladesh be harassment-free spaces. The 76 percent of female university students who experience harassment deserve—and are entitled to—safe campuses and classrooms. We demand that all schools, offices, streets, and homes be safe for all women and girls.

We stand together with our third gender friends who are neglected by their families, and face homelessness, discrimination, and violence. Know you are appreciated, respected, and loved.

Violence against women and girls is a crime. It violates moral, legal and religious standards. It offends reason and our consciences. Because gender-based violence is intolerable, we ask everyone to stand with us during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.

This campaign is observed each year during the 16 days from November 25 to December 10, to acknowledge that girls and women are abused every day of the year. During these 16 days, it is important to remember that every person can be an activist against gender-based violence, an Ambassador for Change.

All fathers, sons, brothers, and husbands; all teachers and mentors; all religious leaders; all police, soldiers, judges, and politicians; all activists and allies: stand together against gender-based violence.

We ask you to stand together to denounce violence against women and girls in every form. We ask you to stand together and commit to making schools, homes, and workplaces harassment-free spaces. We ask you to stand together to report violence. We ask you to stand together and tell all the women and girls in your lives that you will not tolerate gender-based violence.

Join us and stand together as Ambassadors for Change!

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